(a) whether it is a fact that recent research experts have highlighted general contamination of drinking ground water in many parts of the country;

(b) if so, the causes of the contamination of drinking ground water;

(c) whether Government have instituted any enquiry in this matter;

(d) if so, the results thereof; and

(e) whether Government also propose to check the functioning of Central Ground Water Board and to ask Central Pollution Control Board to frame a time bound programme in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Contamination in ground water has been reported in certain parts of some States in the country, which has been caused by industrial wastes, urban wastes, mining and mine drainage, use of pesticides and fertilisers in agriculture and salt water intrusion in coastal areas.

(c) and (d). The studies conducted by the Central Ground Water Board have revealed presence of high level of inorganic elements in ground water in certain parts of the States of Assam, Haryana, Gujarat, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka and National Capital Territory of Delhi. The Government of West Bengal has also constituted a Task Force to examine causes of arsenic pollution in ground water in certain districts of the State.

(e) The Central Ground Water Board is an Organisation of the Government and is working on the directions of the Ministry of Water Resources. The pollution of ground water is to be controlled by the Central Pollution Control Board under various Central Pollution Laws such as "The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974". It is a continuing activity.

Accommodation for Haj Pilgrims

3738. SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of arrangements that were made this year for providing accommodation to Haj Pilgrims at Makkah and Madina;

(b) the details of criteria and guidelines observed for providing the accommodation, including the space provided per pilgrim and the distance from the "Harem-Sharief" at Makkah & Madina; and

(c) the total amount collected from the Haj Pilgrims during the last three years and the total amount spent on providing the accommodation?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) During Haj 1996, 50,347 Indian pilgrims performed the Haj pilgrimage under arrangements made through the Haj Committee. Government assisted the Haj Committee in procuring accommodation for all these pilgrims in Makkah and Madina in advance of their arrival.

(b) Accommodation was procured as per the norms of the Haj Committee. As per regulations of the Saudi government, each pilgrim was provided a space of 2.5 sq. mtrs. in the buildings rented by the Haj Committee. These buildings were located at a distance ranging from 400 mtrs upto a radius of 1000 mtrs. from the Haram Sharief in Makkah and at a distance ranging from 400 mtrs to 900 mtrs from the Haram Sharief in Madina.

(c) The total amounts collected from the Haj pilgrims on account of accommodation during the last three years were as follows:-

Haj-1994	Rs. 29,00,58,728
Haj-1995	Rs. 33,71,10,091
Haj-1996	Rs. 65,65,93,233

The total amounts spent on account of accommodation for the last three years were as follows:-

Haj-1994	Rs. 28,65,05,365
Haj-1995	Rs. 33,10,14,225
Haj-1996	Rs. 57,26,88,242

Difference between the amounts collected and spent during Haj-1994 and Haj-1995 have been reimbursed to those Haj pilgrims who were accommodated beyond 800 metres from the Haram Sharief in Makkah. For Haj-1996, Central Haj Committee is in the process of making the reimbursements.

Vacant Post

3739. SHRI SAMIK LAHIRI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the National Institute of Homoeopathy, Calcutta is running with only 10 permanent teachers instead of the required 64 teachers and even without a permanent Director; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to fill up the vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) and (b). The strength of teaching staff at N.I.H, Calcutta is 39 including that of its Director. At present